

Reading Materials for Students and Teachers

POINT OF VIEW

Effective science teaching and learning in our modern world require the use of many instructional materials. The classroom which utilizes a variety of instructional materials provides a rich learning environment. Boys and girls who are surrounded by such materials, who are encouraged to locate and use them, are gaining valuable experiences in the habit of personal investigation. They are gaining skills in using books and libraries in order to locate needed information, to satisfy personal interests and as a means of pleasure in reading.

"While science is more than the objects around us, it begins with the objects. It deals with the nature of materials and the energy of the universe and with their interrelationships. It deals with the effect of this knowledge on us and the ways that we can use it. Our knowledge of the world around us has, in general, been recorded in written form for purposes of communication—communication to others now and later. Essential as the written form is, its misuse has created some of our most difficult teaching problems.

"There has been a ready assumption that reading about materials and energy is equivalent to experience with these aspects of the world around us. This is not the case. We cannot have first-hand experience through reading, although there is an opportunity for vicarious experience in this way. Some basic first-hand experience is essential; some teaching aids are essential; some reading is essential. It is the task of the science teacher to find the balance among them; then to find and use wisely the most effective resources and procedures available".¹

There are many fine books on all phases and levels of science, its applications, its philosophy, its implications and its teaching. The science teacher has available increasing quantities of potentially valuable printed materials and is faced with the problem of choosing them wisely. Students may be discouraged from or attracted to science, or they may learn or not learn in part because of the quality of the reading materials. The school librarian can be of invaluable assistance in finding and choosing books, but

¹ Richardson, John S., *Science Teaching in Secondary Schools*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J. Prentice-Hall, 1957, p. 256.